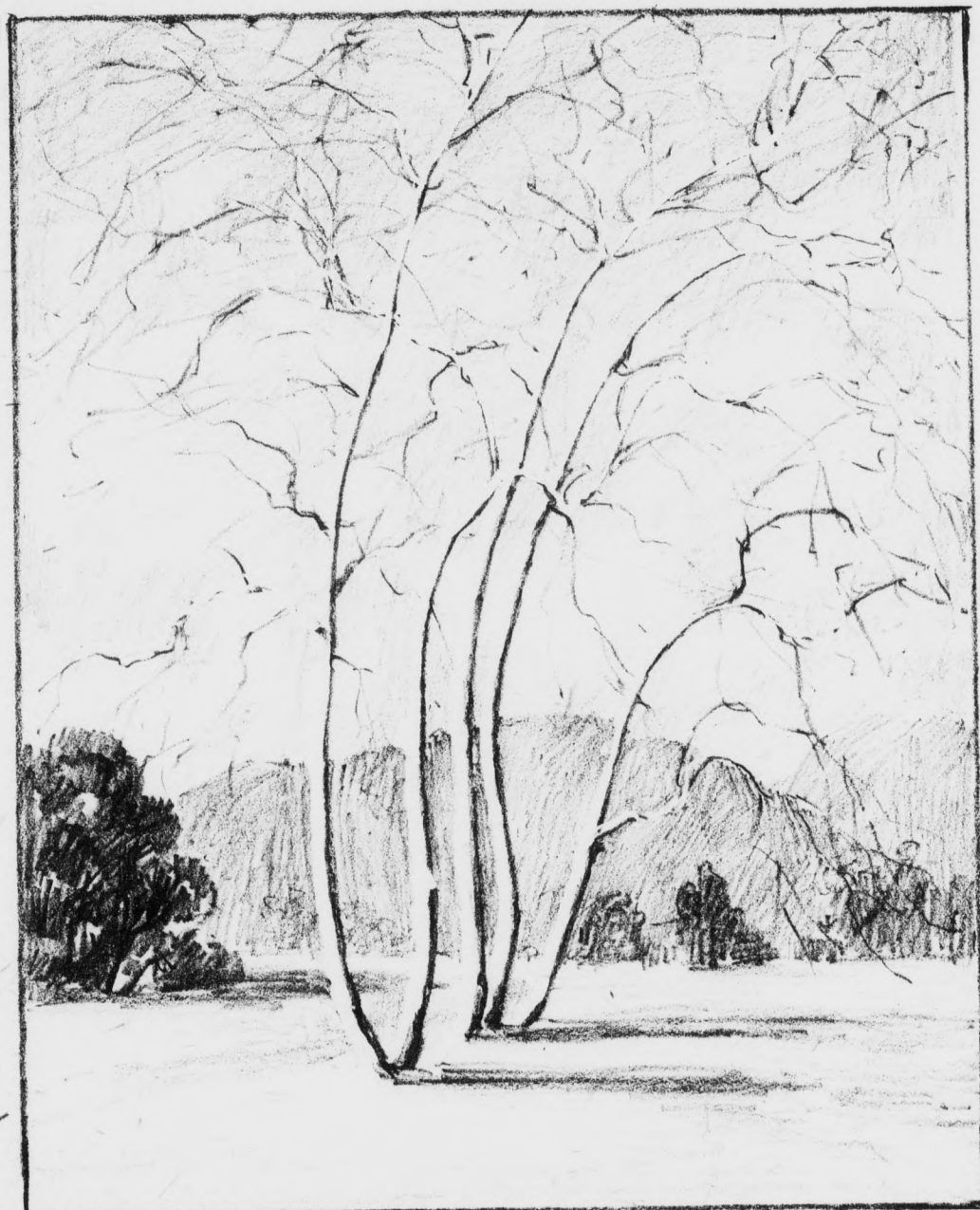


HIGH LIGHTS



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HIGH LIGHTS

NOVEMBER 1940

Volume 1 Number 9

C O N T E N T S

RICHES OF POVERTY	Poem	Leona Dawson Cole	2
EDITORIALS			2
GUILD PROGRAM FOR NOVEMBER			5
AN APPRECIATION		Lee Shippey	6
CONCERT AT RANCHO INSPIRES SERIES			
		Marjorie Hesse	7
THE ARTS GUILD SHOW			7
FRAGILE PICTURES		Leslie B. Wynne	8
SAN GABRIEL ARTISTS GUILD EXHIBIT			
		Bill Burke	10
STRING QUARTET CONCERT AT "VINE"			10
CAMERA CLUB NOTES		Jean Key	11
LITERARY REVIEW		Noureddin Addis	12

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HIGH LIGHTS, from the foothills; issued by the Sierra Madre Arts Guild at the Old Adobe Studio in Sierra Madre, California.

RICHES OF POVERTY

by

Leona Dawson Cole

The windows were bare
And so was the floor,
With only a nail
For a knob at the door.

But curtains are things
And so is a rug,
While the dogwood was life
In the Indian jug.

MENDING FENCES

The tramp of men is on the street. Strong men, young men, seventeen millions of them, march by proudly and without a murmur to do those unpleasant tasks that they have been called upon to do. When they ought to be walking upon the hills and starting their climb to the heights, they go down now into the valleys and over stony ground to mend fences and to build walls, the same old fences and the same old walls that have been built and have been mended so many times. They do not abandon us, these young men, though we deserve it. They do not leave us to our fate, nor even question us, when we have need of them. They do not fail us now though certainly we have failed them, we of the older generations.

How long must the young men continue to be called to these fruitless labors? How long must they continue to give their talents and the years of their priceless youth to these efforts of no avail? Generation after generation, they go forth to mend the fences and to build the walls that fall flat again before they are finished. Generation after generation, like their fathers before them, they raise their fences upon the quicksand, and upon the quagmire, they rear their walls. There is a darkness here that cannot be fathomed, a darkness of stupidity that is blacker than fog-mantled night. Just as long as greed, intolerance, and racial and class hatreds prevail among men, just so long there

will be wolves in the forests to be fenced out of the flocks, and wild stallions in the wilderness to be walled out of the cultivated fields. Just as long as stupidity plans the mending, just as long as shortsightedness and the spirit of revenge direct the building, these fences will surely fall again and these walls will certainly crumble again into dust.

We too, in our day, went out to the mending of fences. We too, in our time, went out to the building of walls. It was not so long ago that we cannot remember. Out of stones without mortar we raised a wall and we built a tower, and we called it Versailles. And behold, through the gaps of that wall and through the chinks of that tower, in the fullness of time, out of the forests came forth a Hitler and a Mussolini, and out of the wilderness came forth a Mikado and a Joseph Stalin.

Go out now, young men. It is your turn now. It may be that you will succeed at last where we have all failed before you. There is certainly a first time to succeed and a last time to fail. For your success, the world has been waiting, hopefully and prayerfully waiting, this long, long time.

* * * * *

IN DEFENCE OF SIERRA MADRE

Little by little for some time past, we have been regretfully forced to take notice that certain folks who live in near-by towns and in cities not-so-far have been long in the habit of making sly jokes and jibes about tiny Sierra Madre. Sorrowfully we say it, and to their shame, these people have "poked fun" at us who dwell in this small Wistaria Town, and have put their bony fingers of ridicule upon our sore spots and upon our hearts. Little by little, one thrust at a time, our peace of mind and our happiness have been assailed and undermined. Now, these cumulative annoyances at last have broken our camel's back and have dashed our pitcher at the well. We have finally made up our minds about this: these innuendoes shall go no longer unanswered.

It is not true that we Sierra Madreans all go regularly to work each morning bare-footed and smoking corn-cob pipes. It is not true that we take up the sidewalks every night at nine o'clock, turn out the street lights, and snore softly in our self-imposed blackout until the sun peeps over the Monrovia hills. It is really not true, as has been so frequently asserted, that our tiny city, this center of Art and of Culture, is hidden under a rustic jungle of wistaria vines. No, these things are distinctly not true. Many other such invidious remarks and implications that have gone the rounds, we pass over in silence as being quite manifestly false and too utterly absurd to call for any refutation even from the most credulous and the chronic unobservant.

Oh, we know well enough why these malign detractors have spewed forth this venom and have sought to cover us under a deep blanket of sarcastic abuse. To sum it all up, they are jealous. Yes, they are madly envious of us who are fortunate enough to be able to live in this idyllic spot where the sun is always tempered to its beauty, and where the frost never comes to wither or to blight its ceaseless charms. We know, too, that not everyone can live in Sierra Madre. A man must live and work where he can. For this reason, we are tolerant; we forgive all of these misguided people even though they have sought to hurt us, for we know how frustrated their lives must seem. For them, we bear neither ill-will nor rancor - nothing but pity and sorrow shall escape our lips.

Little Sierra Madre, a child among cities, asleep by your mountains that run to the wind-harried sea - though you have been made the butt of cruel jests and of mockery, though you stand in the back-wash of the currents of world affairs and in the side eddies of the river of time, you are not last nor the least among the jewels of the earth. Though the shallow sophisticate and the thoughtless pass you scornfully by, the wise men and the famous of the world have sought you out. What care or what concern have you for the mad hustle and the distractions of noisy cities, for the pageants and the empty vanities of the great show places of all the earth? Unto them be their pomp, their tumult, and their hollow glory; unto you, because you have chosen the better way, better things are reserved. Let the world go by its dizzy pace on its aimless journey, its smoke clouds blotting out the glorious sun, its klieg lights and its neon signs drowning out the con-

stellations of the passionless and eternal stars. You shall remain quietly and modestly here, cherishing the flowing line and the glowing color, guarding within the strongholds of your heart the haunting strains of immortal song and the deathless words of the living pen. Lovely and ageless, safe from evils and from alarms, you shall slumber forever here untroubled your soft siesta while turn and turn about, the day shall now smile upon you in its golden splendor, and now the night, a starry skirted mother, shall pass in loveliness, serenely walking within your misted canyons and upon your luminous hills.

L.B.W.

* * * * *

REMEMBER: Regular meetings of the Sierra Madre Arts Guild are held on the first Friday of each month, at 8:00 p.m.

GUILD PROGRAM FOR NOVEMBER

On Friday evening, November 1, Ruby Laverte Thomson and her collaborator, Isabel Stuart Way, will speak to the Arts Guild on the subject of "Pulp Magazine Writing." Following their talks, they will answer questions from the audience.

Mrs. Thomson has sold more than 300 short stories and novelettes to the pulp magazines in the last ten years. She is considered among the leading women producers of fiction writing today. Miss Way, author of the best seller, "Seed Of The Land," has also written for the slick magazines as well as the pulps. Both are "tops" among highly paid writers.

A musical program has been arranged to feature the young singer, George Tyree of Sierra Madre, a former pupil of Mrs. Dwight Marfield of Altadena. He will sing a number of semi-classical songs.

A number of recent paintings by some of the members of the Guild will be on display in the Old Adobe.

AN APPRECIATION

by

Lee Shippey

Every time a copy of HIGH LIGHTS comes out I am surprised. It is so artistically gotten up that such an organization as the National Arts Club of New York might be proud of such an organ. I know it must be produced by a few people who take delight in doing an artistic job and count the job itself sufficient recompense. It is, in fact, a survival, almost an anachronism now that nearly everything which isn't commercial is out of date and the machine-made product is depriving both the artist and the artisan of honest pride in honest work.

We should go in for appreciation much more than we do. Many of us are inclined to think we have done a good deed when we show a little appreciation. We do not realize we have benefited ourselves more than anyone else. You cannot appreciate what is good without being better yourself. You cannot appreciate what is exquisite without awakening within yourself something that may have been dying of neglect in a world madly snatching for baubles, yet which is the most valuable of all your possessions.

It is good to be reminded that here we have one little corner of the world which has not quite gone mad, and this little book is such a reminder. It is visible proof that art for art's sake has not faded from the earth. It is evidence that there still are those who will toil lovingly and long with never a thought of profit, their one hope being to create something as near perfection for its purpose as anything can be. While we have that spirit in our little Arts Guild we have a treasure that is worthy of a shrine, and if we appreciate it enough it may become inspiration to all those with understanding, whether they be here or far from here, who come within reach of its radiance. In a darkening world it is a light which may help them discover a path.

It is the glory and good of Art,
That Art remains the one way possible
Of speaking truth -

Robert Browning -
The Ring and the Book. ll. 842-4

CONCERT AT RANCHO INSPIRES SERIES by Marjorie Hesse

Those wise enough to attend are still talking of the outdoor concert given by the Pasadena W. P. A. Orchestra on beautiful Rancho Santa Anita. Somehow, it was one of those rare blendings of music and mood in a perfect setting. People sat around, easy and informal, in slacks and outdoor clothes listening to the music. To my mind, that is the way music should be heard -- casually and easily. To dress up and sit stiffly in chairs in a stuffy hall is barbarous. After all, there is too much nonsense written about "appreciation" of music. It should be as much a part of your life as bread and cheese.

To get back to the concert, it was sponsored by the Santa Anita Athletic Club of Arcadia, with Ruth Bell as chairman of the committee. Dorothy Stoll is the president of this wide awake group, and many interesting events are in the offing. If present plans are all carried out, next spring a series of concerts will be given on the Rancho in the spot discovered by the original concert committee, which was found to be acoustically perfect. In some way, Tallac Knoll, the lake, the old buildings, and the overhanging canopy of trees become a perfect sounding board.

Carolyn Osmundson, soprano, was soloist. Her flexible, warm voice was beautifully responsive. The orchestra is a most able one, and Maurice Koekler, the director, combines the artist's sensitivity with the stern discipline of a top sergeant to get the best from his musicians.

THE ARTS GUILD SHOW

The Arts Guild Show, "The Gay Nineties," which was repeated at the Elks Temple in Monrovia on October 5th, was well attended and was another great success, financially as well as otherwise. A number of requests have been received from other towns for repeat performances, some of which are now under consideration.

FRAGILE PICTURES

by Leslie B. Wynne

There is a darkness always before our eyes. There is a veil that hangs forever before our faces, a swirling mist of mortality that hems us round about as in a room apart and shuts us in upon ourselves to minute distances and to a host of petty things. We cannot penetrate, we cannot destroy, we cannot brush aside this constant veil. Once, we did not know that it exists. Our circle of vision seemed far-reaching and sharp enough in those days. But as the years have run, we have come to realize, little by little, by other means than visual, that there is a limit to our range of sight beyond whose sphere there shines a greater day whose brilliance we have never seen and whose vistas we have never looked upon.

Why is it that no thoughtful person can ever behold a beautiful object, whether of art or of nature, without being mildly startled and set soberly wondering? Why is it that so many people cannot read a beautiful passage out of a book without being visibly affected? Why is it that at the moment of some great happiness, grown men and women are so often moved to the point of tears? Is it not because our emotions are awakened, and are forever and again being re-awakened, by our constant but unsatisfied desires for a happiness that can never end and for a beauty that can never pass away? Beauty is the symbol of happiness, and both the symbol and its original, we know well, are evanescent here. At the same time, surely, we are made instinctively to feel that somewhere there is a land where both beauty and happiness endure, but our roads and our skies are clouded and we cannot find the way. The pleasure that comes to us from lovely objects is always mixed with a kind of pain that is akin to homesickness and to an utter longing for cherished and familiar places, a pain that reminds us again and again of our futile and our endless search for some undiscovered valley that can neither fail nor weary, and for a sunset that can never fade. We are all as aliens here, and far from home. Beautiful objects are fragile pictures that give us brief and tantalizing glimpses of a day that we have long been seeking and of a paradise that we have yet to find.

Beyond the horizon - always beyond the horizon and beyond the ends of the material world - lie the Gardens of the Hesperides and the shining meadows of

Hy Brasil. We know that they are there. We know that eternal happiness and deathless beauty reside in those hidden lands, could we but find them. Every work of art that tells us so is but a replica of that greater and original beauty. Every happy mood, every lovely object, every delightful scene of nature, is but a flying shadow and a receding dream of that far-off endless happiness and of that loveliness that has no end. It is through beautiful things that the voice of that unfound paradise is heard forever calling. It speaks to us from the painter's canvas and from the sculptor's marble; it speaks to us from the dusky mountain peaks and from the glowing stars of the whirling galaxies. Through the musician's art and through the poet's art, it sings aloud; it echoes and ceaselessly re-echoes through the measured tones of the wind and through the restful rhythm of the ever restless sea. In its softer moods of elusiveness and of unbelievable tenderness, it calls through the flight of a bird or a butterfly over woodland meadows, sighs through the crimson and gold of wind-blown autumn leaves, or whispers out of bending flowers or through the shyly fleeting colors of paling dawn.

Beautiful things are forever beckoning us unto happiness; and because this is so, we delight in all that is beautiful. Men have always loved beauty. The ancients loved it keenly and spent many of their days and nights in a search for that lasting happiness that it was so constantly promising to them. It was for that reason that they set their Edens in so many places and went wandering on far and perilous journeys into savage unknown lands and among strange islands of unfamiliar seas. And to you who follow us in after times, we say that in these matters, you too are forever our comrades and our contemporaries. In the days of your time and to come, when you go forth by the risen hills, when you go down by the valleys through the shade of the whispering trees, remember us. When you walk abroad in the night to gaze in silence upon the starry heavens, or by the waste lands you wander by the indigo line of the moon-dappled sea; when by the sunlight of morning or by the twilight of dusk or of dawn, you look into the heart of a flower or into the face of a little child, do not forget us. We too, in our time, have looked upon all of these and have loved them, even as you.

SAN GABRIEL ARTISTS GUILD EXHIBIT by Bill Burke

Representing the pictorial rather than the "isms" of painting, an exhibit of work from the Los Angeles Branch of the Society for Sanity in Art was shown last month at the San Gabriel Artists Guild.

All of the 27 paintings were examples of intelligent and good craftsmanship, and were part of a collection which recently appeared at the Los Angeles Museum of Art. The Society is endeavoring to educate the public to appreciation of fine painting, as contrasted with some of the modern schools, which give meaning to abstractions and "inward viewings."

Charles J. Bensco, president of the local branch of the Society, whose "A Chapter From Genesis," depicting the death-bed of Rembrandt, was included in the exhibit, said that no artist of merit will paint a distortion or a composition difficult to understand, except as a caprice.

STRING QUARTET CONCERT AT THE "VINE"

On November 14 or 15 (the date has not yet been definitely settled) a concert is to be given at the Wistaria Vine Gardens, Sierra Madre, by a string quartet under the direction of Bernard Sinsheimere. The concert is sponsored by the Arts Guild, and a part of the proceeds is to go to the Guild.

RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP

All members of the Guild who have not yet renewed their memberships for the year 1940-1941, are asked to do so soon. Please send checks to Elmer M. Weese, 358 N. Canon Drive, Sierra Madre, or hand them in to Mr. or Mrs. Dewey at the studio. New membership cards mailed you will have the year number 1940, which means that they are good until July 1941.

CAMERA CLUB NOTES

by

Jean Key

More than a dozen enthusiastic members of the Camera Club met on October 3 for a "laboratory" meeting during which camera studies of Miss Jerry Davis were taken. At the meeting held on October 22, the various shots were judged, and a prize of photographic paper, donated by Rudolph Hartman, was awarded to C.E. Ware of Wilmar. Others who participated in the informal contest were Bernard Wynne, Paul Morton, and Jean Key.

At the October 22 meeting, one of the guests, Dr. Harold R. Lutes, of Montrose, discussed the making of prints from kodachromes, using some of his own prints in illustration.

The Club as a group visited the Biltmore Hotel 1940 Kodak exhibit, Los Angeles, on October 29, where 200 outstanding pictures, including work of many local camera fans, were on display.

The October meeting of the Arts Guild, October 4, was conducted by the Camera Club with an exhibit of the photographic work of the members at the Sierra Madre City Hall. There was a large and interested attendance by camera "fiends" and "fans," with many guests from a number of nearby towns. Mr. R. H. Hayden of the Eastman Kodak Company, spoke to the gathering on the subject of "Color and Color Processing," and illustrated his talk with motion pictures and colored slides.

At the next meeting of the Club, on November 12, nominations will be considered for an election of officers for 1941. The problem for that evening will be a still life. Members are requested to bring examples of their work for criticism.

Regular meetings of the Club are held on the second and the fourth Tuesday evenings of each month at the Old Adobe Studio.

"Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness!" - We are born into life, we arrive at twenty-one, and we pursue happiness all the rest of our days.

Abu Ben Ali

LITERARY REVIEW

by

Noureddin Addis

DEATH IN THE LEMON GROVE - A short and sharp inquiry into the beginnings of things.

It read, to Harvey, like the title of a true detective story - or, perhaps, just a detective story - or, perhaps, just a story ...

"Death in the Lemon Grove" struck him fair amidships. It was a whale of a title. He sat alone pondering at dead of midnight. He was not, as are some of our foremost midnight ponderers, weak and weary; neither the one nor the other. Nor was he intoxicated - quite...

Harvey was a handsome man. All writers of mystery fiction should be handsome men - unless they are gorgeous women. And Harvey was endowed with no mean portion of that fatal masculinity which so many of the opposite sex had explored to their immense satisfaction - and ultimate undoing. In other words, this strong man of letters had not been under the table when IT was passed around; he had, and was, quite a handful.

Caught, as he would probably have put it, in his lonely mountain cabin between the wonder of the midnight and the fragrance of the dawn, Harvey drew closer to the charcoal brazier (for there was a tang in the air), put on his spectacles, and took up the newspaper in which he had glimpsed the intriguing headline.

To report quite frankly, Harvey was genuinely sensitive about his failing eyesight. Such little frostiness as decorated his almost denuded pate was much less damaging to his bold male pride. When members of the fair sex were present, Harvey seldom made use of glasses; thus it was that many a coy leer or incendiary wink eluded him. This was indeed the cause of much chagrin; but Harvey somehow preferred chagrin to his spectacles.

Now as he, properly be-spectacled, glanced again at the paper, he saw that his unaided eyes had played him false. The headline was "Death in Lemon Cove;" and Lemon Cove was the name of a small town. Harvey had visited Lemon Cove many and many a time. That headline puzzled him: Lemon Cove was a peaceful town; its inhab-

itants were peaceable above the average. In all his experience Harvey had never been run out of Lemon Cove. A fact unique in itself, which seemed definitely to imply something ...

He swept his be-lensed glance over the item.

"Aw, shucks!" he growled. For "Death" was simply the family name of the subject. John S. Death was inaugurating his campaign for United States senator with a mass-meeting, oratory, and barbecue at the town of Lemon Cove.

This was emphatically what our master of mystery might have termed a dashing of high hopes. Still it was not without interest; for John S. Death was personally no stranger to Harvey. He recalled John S's political history - his sole claim to preferment - which was solely founded upon the fact that the street superintendent of a small Southern California town had appointed John Death to fill out the unexpired term of a minor official who wished to retire to private life.

Judging by the write-up, it would seem that after John S. had worn out a brace of brooms and a shovel, he began to think. Hard labor was a condition well within the reach of almost any man. In fact it was broadly hinted that Mr. Death had been heard to remark "... any fool can work ...", also "... takes a smart man to ..."

It was above all noteworthy that John S. Death seemed to have what it takes to inspire loyalty. No one - although many must have known his exact words - would repeat Death's world-shaking speeches verbatim. Such words might, Harvey reflected, be held to be subversive; and if by chance certain parties took them up - aha! that would surely spell curtains for Death!

He paused, his genius on fire, and shouted this last phrase aloud. Had he known his Archimedes a fraction as well as he did Conan Doyle, he might have cried "Eureka!" Instead, he yelled, "Hooray! 'Curtains for Death!' - What ho, Watson!"

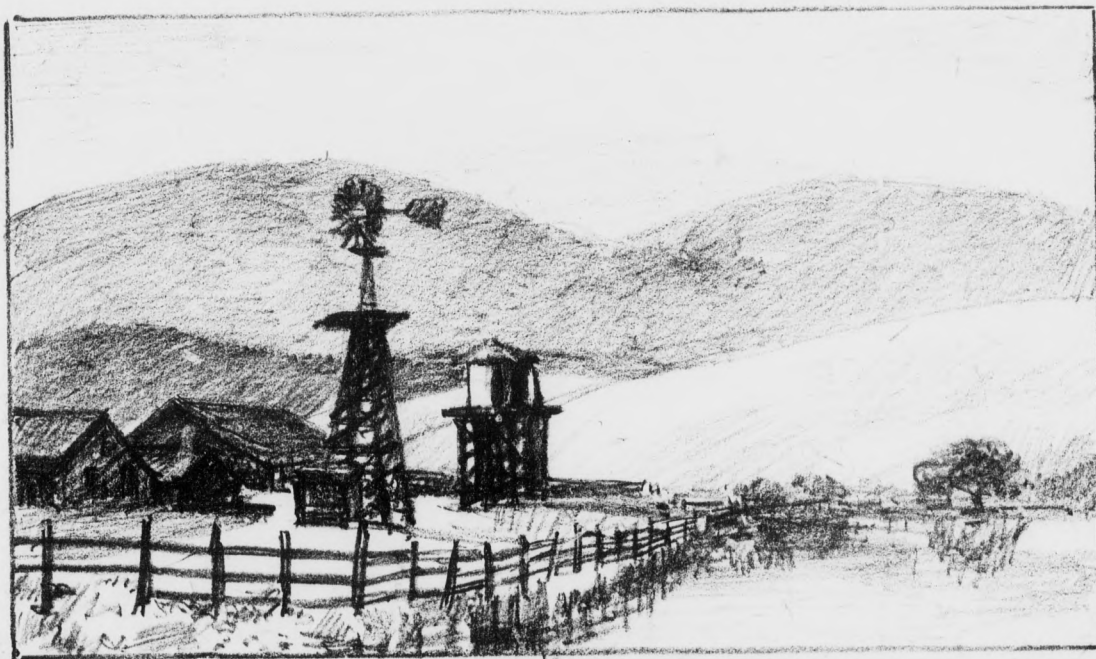
So it is to this fortuitous misreading that the world is indebted for that marvelous bit of introspective mystery by John Harvey Littlejohn - CURTAINS FOR DEATH.



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